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Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of determining a node path through a node graph, comprising:

modifying the node graph in accordance with a metric; ~~and~~

performing a path finding process through the <u>modified</u> node graph to determine the node path.

<u>running an animation sequence that includes the modified node graph;</u>

<u>detecting a change in performance of a platform running the animation sequence;</u>

<u>adjusting the modified node graph in accordance with the change in performance; and</u>

<u>if a specific node of the modified node graph is removed during adjusting:</u>

<u>re-locating the specific node on the modified node graph; and</u>

<u>performing the path finding process using the re-located specific node.</u>

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein:

the node graph comprises a three-dimensional mesh; and

modifying the node graph comprises changing a number of polygons that make up the three-dimensional mesh.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the metric comprises maintaining a steady frame rate for an animation sequence that includes the node graph.

4. (Cancelled)

5. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[4]] 1, wherein the modified node graph is adjusted to compensate for the change in performance of the platform.

6. (Cancelled)

7. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[6]] 1, wherein the modified node graph comprises a three-dimensional mesh and re-locating comprises:

obtaining a position on the three-dimensional mesh that corresponds to the specific predetermined node; and

assigning the predetermined specific node to a polygon in the three-dimensional mesh that is closest to the position.

8. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[6]] 1, wherein the modified node graph comprises a three-dimensional mesh and re-locating comprises:

obtaining a current position of the path finding process on the three-dimensional mesh; and

assigning the predetermined specific node in accordance with the current position.

9. (Currently Amended) A method of determining a node path through a node graph, comprising:

modifying the node graph in accordance with a predetermined platform performance;

performing a path finding process through the modified node graph to obtain the node path;

running an animation sequence that includes the modified node graph;

determining if the platform performance has changed in response to running the animation sequence;

adjusting the modified node graph to compensate for a change in the platform performance; and

re-performing the path finding process through the adjusted modified node graph to obtain the node path.

10. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 9, wherein, if a ~~predetermined~~ specific node of the node modified graph is removed during adjusting, the method further comprises:

re-locating the ~~predetermined~~ specific node on the modified node graph; and

performing the path finding process using the re-located ~~predetermined~~ specific node.

11. (Currently Amended) An article comprising a machine-readable medium that stores executable instructions to determine a node path through a node graph, the instructions causing a machine to:

modify the node graph in accordance with a metric; ~~and~~

perform a path finding process through the modified node graph to determine the node path.

run an animation sequence that includes the modified node graph;

detect a change in performance of a platform running the animation sequence;

adjust the modified node graph in accordance with the change in performance of the platform; and

if a specific node of the modified node graph is removed during adjusting:

re-locate the specific node on the modified node graph; and

perform the path finding process using the re-located specific node.

12. (Original) The article of claim 11, wherein:

the node graph comprises a three-dimensional mesh; and

modifying the node graph comprises changing a number of polygons that make up the three-dimensional mesh.

13. (Currently Amended) The article of claim 11, wherein the metric comprises maintaining a steady frame rate for an animation sequence that includes the modified node graph.

14.-16. (Cancelled)

17. (Currently Amended) The article of claim [[16]] 11, wherein the modified node graph comprises a three-dimensional mesh and re-locating comprises:

obtaining a position on the three-dimensional mesh that corresponds to the specific predetermined node; and

assigning the predetermined specific node to a polygon in the three-dimensional mesh that is closest to the position.

18. (Currently Amended) The article of claim [[16]] 11, wherein the modified node graph comprises a three-dimensional mesh and re-locating comprises:

obtaining a current position of the path finding process on the three-dimensional mesh; and

assigning the specific predetermined node in accordance with the current position.

19. (Currently Amended) An article comprising a machine-readable medium that stores executable instructions to determine a node path through a node graph, the instructions causing a machine to

modify the node graph in accordance with a predetermined platform performance;

perform a path finding process through the modified node graph to obtain the node path;

run an animation sequence that includes the modified node graph;

determine if the platform performance has changed in response to running the animation sequence;

adjust the <u>modified</u> node graph to compensate for a change in the platform performance; and

re-perform the path finding process through the adjusted <u>modified</u> node graph to obtain the node path.

20. (Currently Amended) The article of claim 19, wherein the article further comprises instructions that, if a ~~predetermined~~ <u>specific</u> node of the node graph is removed during adjusting, cause the machine to:

re-locate the ~~predetermined~~ <u>specific</u> node on the <u>modified</u> node graph; and

perform the path finding process using the re-located ~~predetermined~~ <u>specific</u> node.

21. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for determining a node path through a node graph, comprising:

a memory that stores executable instructions; and

a processor that executes the instructions to:

modify the node graph in accordance with a metric; ~~and~~

perform a path finding process through the <u>modified</u> node graph to determine the node path.

<u>run an animation sequence that includes the modified node graph;</u>

<u>detect a change in performance in response to running the animation sequence;</u>

<u>adjust the modified node graph in accordance with the change in performance;</u> <u>and</u>

<u>if a specific node of the node graph is removed during adjusting:</u>

<u>re-locate the specific node on the modified node graph; and</u>

<u>perform the path finding process using the re-located specific node.</u>

22. (Original) The apparatus of claim 21, wherein:

the node graph comprises a three-dimensional mesh; and

modifying the node graph comprises changing a number of polygons that make up the three-dimensional mesh.

23. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 21, wherein the metric comprises maintaining a steady frame rate for an animation sequence that includes the <u>modified</u> node graph.

24.-26. (Cancelled)

27. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim [[26]] <u>21</u>, wherein the <u>modified</u> node graph comprises a three-dimensional mesh and re-locating comprises:

obtaining a position on the three-dimensional mesh that corresponds to the <u>specific</u> ~~predetermined~~ node; and

assigning the <u>specific</u> ~~predetermined~~ node to a polygon in the three-dimensional mesh that is closest to the position.

28. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim [[26]] <u>21</u>, wherein the <u>modified</u> node graph comprises a three-dimensional mesh and re-locating comprises:

obtaining a current position of the path finding process on the three-dimensional mesh; and

assigning the <u>specific</u> ~~predetermined~~ node in accordance with the current position.

29. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for determining a node path through a node graph, comprising:

a memory that stores executable instructions; and

a processor that executes the instructions to:

modify the node graph in accordance with a predetermined platform performance;

perform a path finding process through the <u>modified</u> node graph to obtain the node path;

  <u>run an animation sequence that includes the modified node graph;</u>

  determine if the platform performance has changed <u>in response to running the animation sequence;</u>

  adjust the <u>modified</u> node graph to compensate for a change in the platform performance; and

  re-perform the path finding process through the adjusted <u>modified</u> node graph to obtain the node path.

30. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 29, wherein, if a ~~predetermined~~ <u>specific</u> node of the node graph is removed during adjusting, the apparatus executes instructions to:

  re-locate the ~~predetermined~~ <u>specific</u> node on the <u>modified</u> node graph; and

  perform the path finding process using the re-located ~~predetermined~~ <u>specific</u> node.